

Developing health systems guidance: New series

March 6 2012

In the first paper in a three-part series on health systems guidance, Xavier Bosch-Capblanch of the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, Basel, Switzerland and colleagues examine in this week's *PLoS Medicine* how guidance is currently formulated in low- and middle-income countries, and the challenges to developing such guidance, such as the translation of research.

The authors suggest that further research is needed to adapt existing approaches (e.g., those used in clinical guidelines) to produce meaningful advice that accounts for the complexity of health systems, political systems, and contexts.

The authors comment: "We found that high-level policy and strategic health sector documents frequently mention the need for the development of health systems guidance but suggest that there may still be limited awareness that health systems guidance can provide key inputs into policy-making and that the development of such guidance requires systematic and transparent approaches, inspired by the development of clinical guidelines."

More information: Bosch-Capblanch X, Lavis JN, Lewin S, Atun R, Røttingen J-A, et al. (2012) Guidance for Evidence-Informed Policies about Health Systems: Rationale for and Challenges of Guidance Development. *PLoS Med* 9(3): e1001185.

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